IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) In a data processing system having a user terminal for entering a transaction request as an XML message, wherein said transaction request has one of a plurality of formats and includes a plurality of request parameters, responsively coupled via a publicly available digital communication network to a legacy enterprise server for responding to said transaction request in a legacy format not compatible with said XML message, the improvement comprising:

a. An <u>intermediate server having an</u> adapter responsively coupled to said user terminal which converts said transaction request to an intermediate format; [[and]]

b. A middleware generic gateway <u>located within said intermediate server</u> interposed between said adapter and said legacy enterprise server which converts said transaction request from said intermediate format to said legacy format ~~including constructing a request buffer containing said plurality of request parameters and responsively couples said user terminal to said legacy enterprise server~~<u>; and</u>

c. <u>a request buffer created by said middleware generic gateway containing said plurality of request parameters for transfer of said transaction request to said legacy enterprise server</u>.

2

2. (Currently Amended) The improvement according to claim 1 further comprising a plurality of adapters <u>located within said intermediate server</u> interposed between said middleware generic gateway and said user terminal which responsively couples said user terminal to said middleware generic gateway wherein each one of said plurality of adapters corresponds to a different one of said plurality of formats.

3. (Previously Presented) The improvement according to claim 2 wherein said publicly available digital communication network further comprises the Internet.

4. (Previously Presented) The improvement according to claim 3 further comprising an NT Server housing said middleware generic gateway and providing a WebTx environment.

5. (Original) The improvement according to claim 4 wherein said user terminal further comprises an industry compatible personal computer.

6. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

3

a. A user terminal which generates a service request containing a plurality of request parameters as an XML message using one of a plurality of formats;

b. A publicly accessible digital data communication network responsively coupled to said user terminal;

c. A middleware generic gateway within a <u>generic</u> server responsibly coupled to said publicly available digital data communication network ~~which creates a request buffer from said plurality of request parameters~~; [[and]]

d. <u>a request buffer created by said middleware generic gateway from said plurality of request parameters; and</u>

<u>e.</u> A legacy enterprise server responsively coupled to said generic server.

7. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 6 wherein said server further comprises:

a. A plurality of adapters <u>located within said generic server</u> responsively coupled intermediate said publicly available digital data communication network and said middleware generic gateway.

8. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 7 wherein said publicly accessible digital communication network further comprises the world wide web.

4

9. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 8 wherein said server further comprises WebTx middleware.

10. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 9 wherein said user terminal further comprises an industry compatible personal computer operating under Windows.

11. (Currently Amended) A method of processing a transaction comprising:

a. Composing a service request <u>within a user terminal</u> as an XML message using one of a plurality of formats;

b. Transferring said XML message <u>from said user terminal</u> via a publicly accessible digital data communication network to one of a plurality of adapters corresponding to said one of said plurality of formats within a server; [[and]]

c. Converting said XML message into a standardized format for processing within a generic gateway within said server<u>; and</u>

<u>d. packing said converted service request into a request buffer compatible with a legacy data base management system by said generic gateway</u>.

12. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 11 further comprising:

5

a. Transferring said converted and processed service request in the form of a request buffer from said generic gateway to an end service provider containing said legacy data base management system.

13. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 12 wherein said publicly accessible digital data communication network further comprises the Internet.

14. (Original) A method according to claim 13 wherein said one of said plurality of formats further comprises an active server page.

15. (Original) A method according to claim 13 wherein said one of said plurality of formats further comprises visual basic.

16. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

a. generating means for generating an XML message containing a service request and a plurality of request parameters using one of a plurality of message formats;

b. transferring means responsively coupled to said generating means for transferring said XML message via a publicly accessible digital data network;

c.   adapting means responsively coupled to said publicly accessible digital data network for adapting said XML message to a standardized format using one of a plurality of adapters including creating a request parameter buffer <u>and an input buffer</u> from said plurality of request parameters; and

d.   processing means responsively coupled to said adapting means for processing said service request via a generic gateway.

17.   (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 16 further comprising second transferring means responsively coupled to said processing means for transferring said service request <u>converted into said request parameter buffer and said input buffer</u> to an end service provider via one of a plurality of connectors.

18.   (Original) An apparatus according to claim 17 wherein said one of said plurality of adapters corresponds to said one of said plurality of connectors.

19.   (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 18 wherein said publicly accessible digital data communication network is the Internet.

7

20. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 19 wherein said generating means further comprises an industry compatible personal computer operating under Windows.

21. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for providing communication between a user work station responsively coupled to a server having a legacy OLTP data base management system via a publicly accessible digital data communication network comprising:

a. an XML message service request generated in one of a plurality of request formats by said user work station transferred to said server via said publicly accessible digital data communication network;

b. a plurality of adapters housed within said server each of which capable of converting one of said plurality of request formats to a standardized format;

c. said XML message service request coupled to a particular one of said plurality of adapters associated with said one of said plurality of request formats;

d. a generic gateway responsively coupled to said plurality of adapters which receives said XML message service request converted to said standardized format; [[and]]

e. a request buffer created by said generic gateway from said XML message service request converted to said standardized format; and

f. a plurality of connectors responsively coupled between said generic gateway and said legacy OLTP data base management system wherein a particular one of said plurality of connectors corresponds to said one of said plurality of request formats and wherein said particular one of said plurality of connectors transfers said request buffer converted from said XML message service request [[from]] by said generic gateway to said legacy OLTP data base management.

22. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 21 further comprising an view definition which describes a format for said XML message service request.

23. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 22 wherein said generic gateway converts said XML message service request into a data buffer in accordance with said input view definition.

24. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 23 further comprising an output view definition responsively coupled to said generic gateway.

25. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 24 further comprising an output buffer created by said generic gateway in accordance with said output view definition.